

## July 13 1985 by HoshisamaValmor

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**Summary:** It happened just a week later. (Quick fic fully and solely inspired by saga523 post on tumblr)

**July 13 1985**

Author's Note: Fully and solely inspired by saga523 post on tumblr pointing out the event and the date. saga523 DOT tumblr DOT com / post/ 186217162358/billy-hargrove-never-got-to-see-live-aid

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They should've all got together to watch it. That would've probably been the plan, and what a blast it would've been. Everyone dancing and singing, air guitaring and jumping.

Max hoped the rest of them would be gathered up on Mike's house by now, that they'd spend just as many hours in front of the TV as they used to spend in their basement playing nerdy games. She was sure they'd love it. She would've loved it.

Just one week ago.

She looked at the clock. It had already started. She'd heard about the different broadcasts... but what did it matter? She then looked at the turned off TV, as if it had personally offended her and hurt her in the worst way possible.

She should see it. Come on, it'd be the biggest concert of the entire world and it would happen only once in a lifetime. Of course, it was meant to raise awareness and money, but it was hard for Max to think much beyond the music. She loved music; who doesn't? And so many familiar bands, bands whose songs she could blare her lungs out because she knew the lyrics by heart and no one would tell her to shut up because, thankfully, both her parents were out now, having left earlier in the morning. And even if they were here, they should forgive one or two hyped moments because it was impossible to not be hyped by a music show of that scale.

But she'd be alone. Alone, listening to songs she knew he'd love, songs she knew by heart because, liking them or not, she had listened to them hundreds of times blaring out of the Camaro and of his

bedroom next to hers.

The TV started to blur in front of her eyes and Max fought it only for a second. She felt herself physically losing her balance and her knees bunking from under her, her tears pouring out so suddenly she felt as if they had been strangling her for the past hour without her even noticing, and now took out their full revenge into breaking her completely.

The sobs were violent enough to muffle the first two knocks, but by the third, Max startled up, caught off guard and absolutely broken. She couldn't believe for a second that she'd have enough strength to steady her breathing to anything close to normal or presentable, and the sob that escaped her lips as she glanced at the door proved her right. Just as she had decided to ignore it, they knocked again.

"Max?"

"El?"

Max stared at the door in confusion. A moment of desperation shook her when she feared she wouldn't be able to hide the fact she had been crying this hard, but she got up, scrubbing off the snot and tears as best as she could and sniffed back the remains on her nose.

Eleven didn't seem surprised or questioned the clear signs on Max's face.

"El?"

"Hi."

Max looked behind her friend, even if it was blatantly obvious she was alone, save for the bicycle dropped next to her.

"What's wrong? You came all on your own? What happened?"

"The boys are going to watch a show," Eleven explained, and Max's heart got caught on her throat. "They wanted to bring everyone together."

"El... I-"

"But I don't really feel like it," she had not finished. Max stared into her eyes and unwillingly made the other girl hide her gaze for a moment, perhaps not wanting to see the look Max knew she had, puffy red eyes and eyelashes still heavy with tears. She waited, and for a moment, it seemed Eleven was the one that was waiting before she swallowed and raised her gaze again. "Can I stay with you?"

Maybe she had felt it. But Max knew her powers hadn't returned yet, so she wouldn't really be able to... and yet, here she was.

Max stepped aside and Eleven entered. She sniffed again and cleaned the persistent tears from below her eyes.

"Sorry. I was-" Eleven didn't let her finish before she hugged her, tight. Max widened her eyes and took a moment to return it, feeling it too close, too strong, too real, too soon. Too much like the hug Eleven had wrapped around her just a week-

It was no use. Max restarted to sob, against El's shoulder this time, dragging her down to her knees too. She could feel her reassuring hand gently rubbing her arm and her back, dangerously close and kind, like the words 'It's okay. It's okay' were being whispered through her skin and hammered hard into Max's heart and driving more tears out of her eyes.

She wasn't fully aware of how she was doing the exact same thing for El, and how she was crying too.

It had been just one week for her as well.

"What is that show about?" Eleven asked her eventually when they sat on the floor, and though her voice still cracked, Max explained her. She seemed to understand it, everything about it; including why Max was the way she was about it.

"Do you think it will... help?"

Max pressed her lips together.

"It's been just one week," she tried, but her voice broke between her words. She couldn't look at El, but she wouldn't see her anyway; God, tears have to dry at some point, right? Since when did she have so

much of them? "It's been just one week. Just one, and now he's... he's not here. He was so hyped about it, there's basically every band there that he'd love to see, even Queen's there, and now..."

Eleven reached out her hand and held Max's.

"Can we try? Maybe... there will be a band Dad would like too."

Max looked at her for a while, squeezing her hand back. She inhaled, gathered strength and glanced at the TV tiredly, and then slightly defiantly. She stood up and turned it on, zapping through the channels until she found it.

Queen's concert had literally just started. They sat through it, Eleven's eyes wide while Max kept sniffing and scrubbing hers, time and again when she felt rather than heard the lyrics she had already sang before under her breath, heard Billy sing them too or hum the melodies to himself.

The lyrics of the damn songs... Max realized she hadn't really paid them much mind before when she felt the tears gather on the corners of her vision again. It seemed as though Freddie was talking directly to her, from her and for Billy, like somehow he knew on the other side of the planet just what words were strangled and trapped somewhere inside her. It hurt to listen to them. But at the same time, they felt nice. Like home.

"He's so funny," Eleven said at some point, smiling at Freddie Mercury's majestic and trademark performance. Max caught herself giggling too.

"He's the best."

It was hard not to clap along. Eleven was the first to do it when the thousands of people in the screen did it, and Max almost joined too, but just smiled instead. At a certain point, Freddie did the funniest vocal warm up with the biggest audience the world had ever seen. Max saw how Eleven turned her face to Max with a awed smile, and tentatively tried to follow in sync with the crowd on Freddie's cue. This time Max joined, encouraged by and encouraging the other girl.

"This is fun," Eleven said, a smile on her face against the odds. Max looked at her, and together with the music, it was just too contagious. She smiled as well, tears still falling from her cheeks as the concert continued, the words still pouring out of her and hurting, but slightly less each time, slightly healing as they left, even if they painted images that were not real, of Billy joining the singing and enhancing the words.

Billy would've loved it.

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the end

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Author's Note: Thanks to saga523 for painting this image. Music is therapeutic and the most beautiful thing in the world.

Disclaimer at the end but I obviously don't own Stranger Things.

Thanks for reading.